

**ERRORS IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT WRITTEN**

**BY THE NINTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMP NEGERI 2 BOYOLALI**

**2010/2011**

**Presented to Fulfill One of the Requirements to Achieve the Magister**

**Degree of Language Study**



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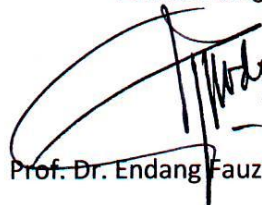
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## **Errors in Descriptive Text Written by the Ninth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 2 Boyolali 2010/2011**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The writer's students in SLA committed many errors in writing descriptive text. They deviated the English rules/conventions, grammar. The grammar governs the utterance to be meaningful. This current study described the writer's student's errors in SLA. The objectives of this research are; 1. To describe the errors, 2. To trace the source of errors, 3. To know what most dominant errors, and 4. To know how frequent the errors occur. The data are described based on the surface strategy taxonomy; omission, addition, misformation, misordering, and blend. The study showed that the errors are caused by the strategy of language transfer and overgeneralization. Unfortunately, their L1 does not help much because English has different characteristics. Most of the difference falls to the negative transfer.

Key Words: error, surface strategy taxonomy, language transfer, and overgeneralization

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The writer's students committed many errors, in acquiring L2. Let's take these two examples:

1. *Tiger is like cat, but different size, size tiger is more big than cat,*
2. *The nose tiger can smell with good.*

These two strings of words are totally inappropriate in English language, because they do not apply the norms/conventions or the grammar of English language. The first intention is *A tiger is like a cat, but different in size, the tiger is bigger*. And in the second form, the student intended to express his idea as *the*

*tiger is able to smell well or the tiger's sense of smell is very keen.* Compared to the corrected forms we know that the student committed some errors.

This present study is intended to answer the problems as the following: 1. What the types of errors are in the Surface Strategy Taxonomy perspective, 2. What the most dominant errors are, 3. What are the sources of errors are, and 3. How often the students make errors.

The writer discusses the findings by the concept of surface strategy taxonomy and language transfer. The objective are: to describe the types of errors in descriptive texts written by the ninth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Boyolali 2010/2011, to know what dominant errors of descriptive texts written by the ninth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Boyolali 2010/2011, to trace the sources of errors of descriptive texts written by the ninth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Boyolali 2010/2011, and to know the frequency of the error occurrence.

This study on errors in descriptive texts written by the ninth grade students of SMP 2 Boyolali 2010/1011 brings about two important benefits; theoretical and practical benefit. Theoretically, the findings of this study give contributions to science development in linguistic study, especially concerning foreign language acquisition. Practically, this study on errors in descriptive texts written by the ninth grade students of SMP 2 Boyolali academic year 2010/2011 has important pedagogical implication. It might be useful for other future researchers, the principal of SMP Negeri 2 Boyolali, the other English teachers, the candidate translators.

## **B. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study belongs to the descriptive qualitative research. It is because the nature of the data is in the form of written documents, varied erroneous sentences, and qualitative research emphasizes on the bases

of the discussion to get clear description on how such result is correct, good, appropriate, and accepted (quality problems).

The Subject of the Research involves 216 students of grade nine SMP Negeri 2 Boyolali 2010/2011. For the sake of efficiency, the researcher only took 24 students. They consist of 14 female students and 10 male students. The researcher takes them randomly.

The Object of the Research is the sentences containing errors taken from 24 descriptive texts written by the ninth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Boyolali 2010/2011. The students wrote the descriptive text when they had their national final examination in the academic year of 2010/2011.

The data are erroneous sentences made by the ninth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Boyolali 2010/2011. The erroneous sentences are taken from 24 pieces of descriptive texts. The descriptive texts were composed when the students had writing practice of the final examination.

To collect the data, the writer applied literature study since he tries to analyze the students' errors and the concern of the final project is to find out errors in descriptive texts. The process of collecting the data is as the following: Asking the students to write a descriptive text about 250 words in various topics, Picking out the erroneous sentences from the text, classifying the erroneous sentences based on linguistic taxonomy, analyzing the erroneous sentences, and counting the frequency of the occurrence.

Firstly, the data that have been accumulated are classified in terms of linguistic taxonomy. To know clear description of the cognitive process that underlies the learners' mistakes or errors, the data are then classified based on the surface structure taxonomy.

The second step is that the erroneous sentences are calculated. Each type of errors is calculated to get the percentage of each type of errors and to get clear description of the frequency of errors occurrence. In this way, it can be found the most problematic case in writing descriptive texts. The last step is the explanation of errors. The writer tries to explain how or why such errors happen. And he will discuss the sources or causes of errors which occur in the written production. At the end of the data analysis, the writer draws a conclusion.

### **C. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The research findings consist of 294 erroneous sentences. These erroneous sentences are discussed based on two theories; surface structure taxonomy and language transfer.

#### **1. Types of Errors in Surface Strategy Perspective**

Surface Strategy Taxonomy describes this taxonomy as being on the ways surface structures are altered, Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982: 150). They describe the Surface Strategy Taxonomy into five categories. They are as follows; (1) omission, (2) addition, (3) miss-formation, (s) miss-ordering, and (5) blends.

##### **a. Omission**

An omission is a type of error which is characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance, Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982: 154), for example; *She write a letter* and *He eating breakfast*.

##### **1) Omission of -s/es Verb Inflection**

It \*include kindly

**2) Omission of –ed1 verb Inflection**

Yesterday, Lili \*give birth to three rabbit.

**3) Omission of –ed2 Verb Inflection**

My fish body is \*make up of . . . .

**4) Omission of –ing Verb Inflection after Preposition**

She have sharp tusks for \*bite the pray.

**5) Omission of –ing Verb Derivation after a To Be Linking Verb**

His work is only \*eat

**6) Omission of ‘to’ Infinitive Marker or –ing Verb Inflection after a Predicate Verb**

It like \*eat a meet

**7) Omission of ‘to’ Infinitive Marker after Predicative Adjective**

I am very happy \*have Doggy

**8) Omission of ‘do’ Auxiliary Verb in Negation**

They \*[ . . . ] not like rice without fish

**9) Omission of Predicate Verb**

I \*[ . . . ] in trouble

**10) Omission of ‘be’ Verb after the Modals**

Manis can \*[ . . . ] sick too

**11) Omission of ‘be’ Auxiliary in Passive Voice**

She \*[ . . . ] born 3 months ago

**12) Omission of Preposition**

I will take care \*[ . . . ] them.

**13) Omission of Definite Article**

Ima (cat) is \*[ . . . ] same as Piko

**14) Omission of Indefinite Article**

I have \*[ . . . ] beautiful dog



### **15) Omission of –s/es Noun Inflection in Plural Form**

It has two \*leg

#### **b. Addition**

An addition is a type of error which is characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in well-formed utterance, Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982: 156).

#### **1) Addition of –s/es Verb Inflection**

I \*has a chicken

#### **2) Addition of –ing Verb Inflection**

She always \*walking in the morning

#### **3) Addition of ‘to’ V1 infinitive Marker in Predicate Verb**

It usually \*to fly.

#### **4) Addition of ‘be’**

It \*was give birth

#### **5) Addition of –ly adverbial Derivation Marker**

Doggy can run very \*fastly.

#### **6) Addition of Preposition**

They always go \*to home

#### **7) Addition of Definite Article**

Besides milk, it like to drink \*the water

#### **8) Addition of Indefinite Article before a Mass Noun**

It has \*a brown fur

#### **9) Addition of Indefinite Article before a Plural Noun**

It has \*a two long ears

#### **10) Addition of Indefinite Article before an Adjective**

It is \*a funny.

#### **11) Addition of –s/es Noun Inflection in Singular Form**

It is \*cows

## **12) Addition of derivation Affixes**

It include \*kindly

### **c. Misformation**

Misformation errors are characterized by the use of the wrong form of structure or morpheme, Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982: 158). For example: *I \*seen her yesterday.*

#### **1) Misformation of 'do' Auxiliary in Negation**

He \*don't like playing

#### **2) Misformation of 'be' as Verb**

They \*is the cute rabbits

#### **3) Misformation/misselection of 'be' Instead of Certain Verb**

It \*was four legs

#### **4) Misformation of Adverb for Adjective**

My cat is a \*bravely fighter

#### **5) Misformation of Adjective instead of Adverb of Manner**

Resky live \*with very \*happy

#### **6) Misformation of Noun instead of Adjective**

My cat has soft and \*shine feather

#### **7) Misformation of Noun instead Verb**

My family always \*celebration it

#### **8) Misformation of Subjective Pronoun for Possessive Adjective**

\*It fur . . . very dense

#### **9) Misformation of Objective Pronoun for Subjective Pronoun**

\*Me and the cat has already together for three years

#### **10) Misformation of Subjective Pronoun for Objective Pronoun**

I don't give \*they name

#### **d. Misordering**

These types of errors are characterized by the incorrect placement of morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance, Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982: 162), for example; *\*He every time comes late home.*

##### **1) Noun Phrase Word Order**

Resky have eyes with \*color red

#### **e. Blend**

Blend error is sometimes called the contamination or cross-association or hybridization error, James (1998: 111).

##### **1) Blend of 'very' with Qualitative Adjective 'much'**

Cathy \*very hate mouse.

hates mouse very much

##### **2) Blend in if Clause for Adverb of Time**

\*If he [ . . . ] hungry, he sound 'mew, ... , mew'.

When

##### **3) Preposition Choice**

\*In home, I have a dog

At home

##### **4) Conjunction Choice**

The body is small and he can run very fast.

but

##### **5) Diction**

###### **(a) False Friend**

My cat has soft and shine \*feather

fur

**(b) Wordy Construction**

Every day \*in the morning, I give . . . .

Every morning

**6) Misspelling**

They \*life in a small pool

**2. Frequency of Errors**

The highest percentage of occurrence is omission errors 99 sentences (33.14%). The second major error is misinformation. There are 78 sentences, 26.03%. Blend error sits in the third major error. There are 61 sentences (22.29%). The fourth major error is of addition error. The writer found 47 sentences (15.49%) containing addition error.

**3. The sources of errors**

After identifying the data of erroneous sentences, the write tries to trace the source of errors. Firstly, he notified the errors and then tried to confirm the errors to the students to know what the intended meaning they want to express is. Secondly, the writer decided the source of the errors based on Error Analysis.

**a. Language Transfer**

Language transfer is also known as L1 interference. The study shows that the students make use of the Indonesian language forms and concepts to that of English language, for example;

L1: setiap hari di waktu pagi saya . . . .

IL: every day in the morning I . . . .

TL: every morning I . . . .

**1) Grammar Transfer**

L1: saya sangat senang . . . .

IL: I very happy . . . .

TL: I am very happy . . . .

## **2) Overgeneralization of the Target Language**

Overgeneralization is one of the strategies of learning language when the learner overextends one rule to cover instances to which that rule does not apply.

### **(a) Diction**

L1: diantara yang lainnya, dia paling . . . .

IL: Between the others, he . . . .

TL: Among the others, he . . . .

### **(b) Grammar**

L1: Mereka selalu pulang ke rumah

IL: They always go to home

TL: They always go home

## **4. Discussion of the Research Finding**

Viewed from the perspective of surface structure taxonomy, the errors are categorized into 5 groups; omission, addition, misformation, misordering, and blend. The highest percentage of occurrence is error on omission 99 sentences, 33.14%. The second major error is misformation. There are 78 sentences, 26.03%. Blend and addition sit on the third and fourth rank of major error. There are 61 sentences (22.29%) containing blend errors and addition consists of 47 sentences (15.49%).

How do such errors above occur? What are the sources of the error made by the students in their descriptive text? First, the study shows that the students use the strategy of language transfer and overgeneralization of the target language. The effect of language transfer consists of transfer in vocabulary and grammar transfer.

The students just express their ideas in their L1 and then translate the words literally into the target language without considering the acceptability and the norms/convention/grammar. This way, of course, creates many errors. And the second cause is by overgeneralization of the target language. It covers vocabulary and grammar problems. In diction choice the students often fail to take the correct word referring to certain ideas as *feather* for *fur*, *house* for *home* etc. In grammar the students often over-generalized a certain rule for all which actually should have been different.

Compared to the five previous studies, this study is not precisely the same. The theory used in this research is more specific than theirs; surface structure taxonomy and language transfer strategy.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

The writer scrutinizes the analysis of the erroneous sentences and here is the summary of the research problems as follows;

Viewed from the perspective of surface strategy taxonomy, the errors are categorized into 5 groups; omission, addition, misformation, misordering, and blend. The highest percentage of occurrence is error on omission 99 sentences, 33.14%. The second major error is misformation. There are 78 sentences, 26.03%. Blend and addition sit on the third and fourth rank of major error. There are 61 sentences (22.29%) containing blend errors and addition consists of 47 sentences (15.49%). The data

findings show that the grade IX students of SMP Negeri 2 Boyolali academic year 2010/2011 committed many errors in constructing descriptive text.

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